

A
R E V I E W
O F T H E
T R A G E D Y
O F
J A N E S H O R E.

Consisting of
O B S E R V A T I O N S
O N T H E
Characters, Manners, Stile, and Sen-
timents.

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A
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THE Tragedy of *Jane Shore* having now received the Applause of the Town, and being, in the Opinion of many, not incompetent Judges, superior to any other Theatrical Performance of the same Author, I thought it no improper Employment of a few Hours to run through the Basis of the *Drama*, and examine with what Justice, with what Agreement to the Judgment of Nature, or the Rules of Art, this Play may be said

to deserve so high a Character. I must own my self unfurnished with Spleen and ill Nature, those general Ingredients in the Composition of a Critick; so that if my Reader shall find me an Advocate on the favourable Side, he must impute it partly to the Goodness of my Temper, and partly to the Conviction of my Judgment, that I commend not without Reason.

What I propose to consider in this Tragedy, is, whether the Characters are fit, and adapted to the Nature of Tragedy, and carry with them a good Moral, instructive to the Audience.

In the next Place, whether the Characters are justly maintain'd, and the Conduct of the Poet be all of a piece through the whole *Drama*.

And then I shall try to point out some peculiar Beauties in the Sentiments, and give some Reasons for their affecting the Hearer, which are grounded upon Nature, that unerring Guide and Judge of the Motions of the Soul.

My Scheme, you see, leaves out that Part of the Critick, where his Heart triumphs most, and his Pride rejoyses in the least Slip of his Author, the Consideration of the three Unities. I don't know what others imagine, but I ever look'd on these Niceties as a pure piece of Mechanism, which are to be attained without Genius, Spirit, or any Thing beside that makes a Poem admirable. I am satisfied the Author of the Play before me consider'd them in this View, and thought it not worth his Care to make a laborious Contrivance for the Preservation of these Rules, and the Pleasure of the *Criticks*. I don't at all doubt but many a heavy Page of *Aristotle's Poetry* will be objected to our Author, and want of Art and Literature sworn upon him with as bold a Grace as Rudeness, Pedantry, and ill Nature, and Manners can supply.

But leave we these Men of *obscure Diligence*, and proceed to something more agreeable; to consider whether the Characters
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are adapted to the Nature of Tragedy, and if the chief Part does not carry with it an instructive Moral.

The Foundation of many of the ancient Tragedies is placed upon Rapes, Murders, Incests, Parricides, and such Crimes, which give a shocking Idea to the Soul, and their Punishment cannot be said to have so proper an Influence on the Audience, because the Vices are in themselves so enormous and remote from common Practice, that the Moral cannot reach Home to the Conscience of the Hearer. The Scene of these Practices is represented in Persons of the highest Distinction in Princely Families, and the Courts of Kings and Heroes, which is indeed a very necessary Circumstance for the Improvement of the Spectator, who when he observes the Methods of Providence in doing Justice upon so distinguished Offenders, must needs think that the same Vengeance will over-reach Criminals of lesser Note under the same Circumstances. The End then of Tragedy is to improve the Conduct of Life by the Representation of triumphant Virtue, or afflicted Guilt; and for the attaining this End, it is necessary that it interest the Passions strongly in the Favour of one, and the Dislike of the other.

Yet for all what has been said, a Character in it self remarkably vicious in some part, and virtuous in others, is a proper and suitable Character to work the same Effects, and equally to improve the Minds of the Audience. A Part of this kind is really more agreeable to what we see in humane Life, the very Colour and Mixture of Nature herself, and in that respect certainly fit to be introduced. Now if the reigning Vice that has had the Ascendant of the Soul be punished with a due Severity, and the good Parts of the Character left as fit for Imitation, though not powerful enough to over-balance the Weight of the Guilty, then in my Opinion such a Character is in all respects proper for a Tragedian to work upon, and he may promise himself more Success than if he drew that *Monster* a faultless Character. Nay, perhaps it is more likely to Influence the Hearer, than any other, since it bears a nearer Resemblance to the Circumstances of their
own

own Life, and is more easily applicable to their Condition than the Punishment of excessive Impiety, or the Reward of strict Virtue can possibly be.

But it is objected in the next place, that such a Character cannot move the Passions of the Audience, because the Distress, tho' never so great, is but the Demerit of the Criminal, and that therefore they cannot pity such a Sufferer. Now this is entirely false, and if we look into the Source of our Compassion, we shall plainly perceive that a Vicious Person, I mean a qualified one, may, and does, deserve Pity.

To make a Vicious Character raise the Compassion of an Audience, if not in some measure merit it, Circumstances like these may very much contribute.

First, That the Vice it self, tho' the most immoral and pernicious in it self, have some Abatements from common or peculiar Accidents, the Strength of the Temptation, the natural Weakness of the Offender, or the Power and Influence of some other Person in the Commission of the Crime.

Beside, that which alleviates the Guilt in the Eye of the Spectator, and consequently disposes him to Compassion, are the other Parts of the same Character. Now if they appear fair, unblameable, or conspicuously Virtuous, and fit for Imitation, then the Virtuous Person is seen under a divided View, and Humane Nature of Course inclines to the kind forgiving Part.

Again, the Demeanor of the Person under the Punishment of the Crime, contributes to the same End; for if the Behaviour be then mild, humble, submissive, penitent, with a due Sense of the Guilt, and a suitable Compunction of Sorrow for it, then not only Nature, but Morality stand forth and plead in behalf of the Sufferer. The guilty Person seems then to have paid the Price of his Crimes, and is no longer an Object of Justice, but Mercy, that is Compassion.

There

There are still other Circumstances which may happen, so as to make a Vicious Character be treated with Tenderness and Commiseration.

These are owing to the Contrivance and Art of the Poet, who may interweave Circumstances that may still show the Vicious Person in a more favourable Light. Such is the Refusal to comply with any base, ungenerous, wicked Action, in order to avoid the Shame and Publick Punishment of the Crimes imputed to him.

And in the last place, the superiour Guilt and more heighten'd Impiety of the Avenger, who assumes the Power of Punishment out of Revenge, and not of Justice, out of a Hatred to the Person, not the Crime. When such a detestable Character is put in opposition, as it were, to one of an inferiour Guilt, the natural Aversion that we conceive to such a Character, helps very much to encrease our Pity for the other. If we apply these Rules or Observations upon Humane Nature to the present Case, we shall see that these Motives of Compassion plead strongly for *Jane Shore*.

She is an Adulteress, but her Fellow Offender is a *Monarch*; she a young, indolent Woman; he an agreeable, insinuating, powerful Lover: Her Character is not only clear and unspotted in other Instances of Life, but she abounds with Virtues; Generosity, Tenderness, Affability, and what of all the rest ought to ensure a Return of the same Pity to the Miserable. The Harlot is in some Parts of her Character a Saint; Largeness of Heart, Humility, Charity, Meekness shine about and distinguish her. Her Deportment in the Day of her Visitation is modest, resigned, patient. She might have waded off the Rage of the *Proctor* by a vile Sin, the Injury of the Helpless and Innocent; but she scorns the Wages of such an Iniquity, and rather chuses to suffer for what is pass'd, than to merit worse Miseries by so monstrous an Impiety. And lastly, the Blackness of the Persecutor's Character sets her

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her off still to a better Advantage, and by his being unpardonably bad, she becomes more an Object of Forgiveness. Here is then a strange *Contrast* of Images, and Variety of Incidents, that make this Character, tho' vitious, yet pleasing; and so pleasing, as to force us to a Condolance of her Misery, almost as much as if her Character were free from Faults, and entirely Virtuous.

His Lacrymis Vitam damus, & misericordius ultro.

*On Grief like this we Grace, and Life bestow;
Unbid, the Springs of soft Compassion flow,
And melt us in a Sympathy of Woe.*

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We may now take our Leave of this Character, which, I think, is prov'd neither unfit for Tragedy, nor without an instructive Moral.

The next Thing propos'd, is to consider whether the other Characters are well maintained, and the same thro' the Texture of the *Drama*.

The Protector *Richard* is represented as an ambitious, cruel, bloody, intriguing Person, sticking at no Means to obtain the End of his Wishes, the Crown. The Business of the first Scene opens this Design, his first Discourse with *Hastings* tends to the same End, by endeavouring to oblige him, in his Petition for his Mistress, to come into his Measures. Their second Meeting urges the same, the Question is propounded, his Temper try'd, and the first Resolution of the Protector made good to sacrifice him for a Refusal. His Usage of *Hastings*, who had been his Friend, and his Persecution of *Jane Shore*, and indeed every Word and Act of his come up to the Character, which is preserved to the last with a due *Decorum*.

The

The Character of *Hastings* is a plain, friendly, open, noble Gentleman, without a Guard upon his Conduct, or a Reserve upon his Meaning, necessary Cautions for those he dealt with. He is amorous, passionate, but scrupulous of his Honour in other Points; a Friend to his Country, and a Lover of the Person of his King. His plainness and unwary Conduct betray him to the Arts of the Protector, and his passionate Love helps one of his Mistresses to destroy him. His natural Temper, warm and sanguine, breaks out on all Occasions, and over-rules him both in his Politicks and his Love, as is plain by the Scene between him and the Protector, and the other between him and *Alicia*. The Nobleness of his Nature, and his good Sense, is seen in the fourth Act, when he comes to prepare himself for the Scaffold.

Alicia is of a fond, jealous, inflammable Temper, the very first Hint of *Hastings*'s Kindness kindles her, and she concludes, if he petitions for *Jane Shore*, she is abandoned. This hurries her into all the violent Measures that a Heart-fearful of a Rival can enter into; from this she breaks her Friendship with *Shore*, becomes the Accuser of her Lover, and partly the Instrument of his Ruin. It is enough only to mention the Effects and Consequences of this Character, to show that it is justly preserved. One thing more is observable in this Part, which shows the utmost Spirit of *Jealousie*, that it expires not even with the Person Beloved, but from a kind Word of her supposed Rival from dying *Hastings*, she persecutes her to the last Extremity. This, I think, is an excellent Stroke of the Poet, to keep up the Passion of *Jealousie* to that degree, and by being what we see in common Life, it more deserves our Attention and Applause.

The remaining Parts, are those of *Dumont* and *Bellmour*, the Husband and the Friend; the one generous and faithful, the other fond, tender, and forgiving: Their Action and Expression throughout the Play, rise up to the Description I have given of them. The

Contrivance of the Poet, that the Wife should not discover that *Dionant* is her Husband, till the very last Minutes of her Life, is a Circumstance probable, and gives Occasion for a very passionate Scene of mutual Distress in the Close of the Tragedy. As to *Ratcliffe* and *Cassidy*, they are only subservient to their Master's Design, and there being nothing very remarkable in their Characters, we leave them for a Subject that will afford us more Materials for Reflection, and the Entertainment of our Understandings.

Before we enter upon an Examination of the Beautiful Images, the Strength, Justness and Propriety, of the Sentiments which we meet with in this Tragedy, it may not be amiss to consider one Particular, almost peculiar to this Writer, and which gives no inconsiderable Grace and Ornament to his Compositions. This is an Allusion very frequent with him to Passages in Holy Writ, sometimes the Places are but lightly touched upon; at others we may observe many Lines and elegant Descriptions transplanted into his Writings, and the Phrase it self preserved with a becoming Dignity, and much to the Embellishment of the Poetry. But since some are apt to doubt of the Fitness of such an Application of Scripture, let us go a little farther into the Matter, and then it will appear, I believe, that such Allusions are not only pardonable, but deserve our Applause.

The Books then, from whence most of the Images and noble Ideas are drawn, are those which many have supposed to have been writ Originally in Verse, such as *Job*, the *Psalms*, and many of the Prophets. It is no matter indeed what Numbers they consisted of, it is evident that a strong Spirit of Poetry reigns in them, that they abound with a Boldness of Metaphor, an inexpressible Variety of surprizing, delightful, entertaining Images, agreeable Descriptions, and every other Part of Poetry that is apt to work upon the Passions, and warm the Imagination. In short, they have in them every necessary Part of Poetry, but the Numbers, and

and very often, by the Happiness of the Translation, they seem to strike the Ear with an harmonious Numerosity, that is but little inferior to the Measures of Verse. Why may not then a Christian Poet take the Advantage of these Materials, and draw into his Writings such Passages, as cannot diminish the Sublimity, or Beauty of the Sacred Pages, and may very much heighten and improve his own? Are they proper only in those Places where they stand? Or will they not rather fit some others too, and admit of an easie Turn to adorn the Circumstances of Life in other Persons, than those of whom they were first spoke? Is not the Application, not only innocent, but moving and instructive? A Christian *Apostle* cites an Heathen Poet for a Description of a Nation, and sure a Christian Poet may safely borrow from the Sacred Writings. Of all the Books, *Job* seems to be fullest of this Spirit; and the Tragedian has often, in other Plays, made good Use of some fine Descriptions out of it; nor has he forgot it in the present Performance, but drawn many beautiful Passages and Expressions from that moving History or Allegory. To produce one from the 31st Chapter, where *Job* vindicates his past Life from any Imputation of Injustice, want of Mercy and Charity; and makes a bold Appeal to the World for his Innocence and his Virtue. The Poet has given the Substance of this Appeal by the Mouth of his Penitent, in these Lines:

If in the Days ———

When most my Heart, was list'd with Delight,

If I withheld my Morſel from the Hungry,

Forgor the Widow's Want, and Orphan's Cry;

If I have known a Good, I have not shar'd,

Nor call'd the Poor to take his Portion with me,

Let my worst Enemies stand forth, and now

Deny the Succour, which I gave not then.

Let any one compare these excellent Lines with the Original, and observe how fitly they are adapted to the Person who speaks them, I am perswaded he will be far from thinking the Sacred Pages injured by the Translation. It were an easie and no unpleasing Entertainment to trace the Tragedian in many other Imitations of this Nature, but I leave them to be marked by the Reader, who, if he has any Taste, cannot but be pleas'd with the Poet, whenever he meets with him in a Tract of Scripture.

Now it is fit we consider the Style and Sentiments of this Play; the first is professedly in *Shakespear's* Manner, and the second seems not an Imitation of any particular way of Thinking among our great Poets. I distinguish here between the Style, and the Thought, because it is evident that the Author has not thought it proper to give a Loose to his Fancy, and spring out into *Shakespear's* ungovernable Flights; nor has he indeed brought in his Images so thick as that Poet spun out his Metaphors, or struck in to any of his uncommon and peculiar Ways of Thinking.

The Style then in this place is no more than the Phrase, the manner of Expression, which is indeed like *Shakespear's* in all the Parts of it that deserve Imitation; for there are many certainly which for all our Fondness to that great Genius, have not the least Title to our Approbation. Mr. *Dryden*, in his *All for Love*, seems to have taken the contrary Method, and to have endeavoured to Copy the Spirit and Faucy of his Predecessor, rather than his Words, tho' he shews some Kindness for them too in many Places. The *Laureat*, who always gave a Reason for his own Excellence, imagines, that if he had exceeded himself in this Performance, the Merit of it was owing to his Endeavours, to rise up to the Original in his View. I would not intimate that *Shakespear* is not followed by this Author, but only say that the Phrase, rather than the Sentiments, are what seem to be the Subject of the present Imitation.

This

This is, without doubt, a Beauty, and what deserves Applause when done with such a happy Hand as the present: For all the Rust and Obsolescence of *Shakespear* is filed off and polished, what is rough, uncouth, and ill-fashioned in his Expressions, is left behind, and so much only remains of him as is agreeable to the Ear, significant or venerable. There is beside what *Horace* calls the *Junctura callida* in the Use of these Phrases, that is, there is such a good Contrivance in the placing them, that either the preceding or the following Words are explanative of their Meaning, so that the Hearer is not at a stand, but takes the Sense as it runs off from the Mouth of the Actor. Without such an Art as this in the Disposition of even Words themselves, a Poem may become heavy, unpleasing, unintelligible, which with a little Skill might be entertaining enough to every Taste. Now this sort of Imitation has its Difficulties, for it must be a long and familiar Acquaintance with an Author to make such an apt Resemblance of his Manner, as not to appear like a scrupulous Servility to him, nor too remote a Likeness which requires Times to suit the Copy with the Original. Thus it must be, (and thus, I think it is in this Place) when any one proposes an Imitation to gain himself any Credit, and not injure his Original; it is what Sir *John Denham* says of Mr. *Cowley* in his imitating the Ancients, *wearing their Dress, and not their Cloaths*; the one were a Robbery, the other shews a Value and Respect to the Owner. But because the Authority of *Horace* is allowed the best, and his Judgment relied upon by the Criticks in this Subject, let us see what Liberty he gives in the Usage of old Words and Phrases in Imitation of Antiquity. In the Second Epistle of the Second Book he has handled this Case at large, and because I never met with a good Translation of it, I shall venture upon one.

Qui legitimum cupiet fecisse Poema,

Whos'er feels this Ambition in his Breast
To write a Poem that shall stand the Test,
The Rules of Art, and an impartial View,
Must play the Poet, and the Critick too:
And while his Head performs the Writer's Part,
The Censor's Honesty must rule his Heart.
His daring Pen will every Word displace
That wants Propriety, or Strength, or Grace,
Low, and unworthy Phrases must recede,
Tho' Usage much, and long Possession plead,
Tho' for a while the doubtful Bard delay,
And a reluctant Fondness still betray.
He from Obscurity and Dust shall raise
Old proper Words, and Dignity of Phrase,
Such Words as buried now beneath the Heap
Of mouldring Language in Oblivion sleep,
These shall his useful Diligence explore,
And shew us how from that authentick Store
Our Cato's, and Cethegi talk'd before.

My Reader, I hope, will pardon the length of this Quotation, and nothing, I assure him, but its bearing a necessary Relation to my Design, could have made me endeavour at so difficult a Task as the Translation of Horace.

As

As to the Images and Sentiments in general, they are natural delicate, unaffected, without straining of Thought, or injudicious Mixtures of contrary *Ideas*, the little Delights of those who want a Taste to relish the more substantial Beauties of Poetry.

The Glitterings of false Embellishments that seem to stand out of the Body of the Work, and not necessarily to belong to it, are here judiciously avoided, those things it may be are fine in themselves, and so is a well-sculptur'd Arm, but yet if it does not agree with the Proportion of the other Parts, it would become any other Place better than a good Statue to which an ill Artist might affix it. Nature is the Ground-work for to please, and as soon as the Poet leaves Her, he loses his best Guide. I will produce an Instance how a plain Description, by its being exactly agreeable to Nature, and the Ideas being chosen with good Judgments, appears charming and transporting. It is at the latter End of the Second Act, where *Dumont* proposes to *Jane Shore* a Country Retreat for her Security, and gives a Landskip of the Place and Neighbourhood in the following Manner.

*Within an ancient Forest's ample Verge,
There stands a lonely, but a healthful Dwelling,
Built for Convenience, and the Use of Life;
Around it Fallows, Meads, and Pastures fair,
A little Garden, and a limpid Brook,
By Nature's own Contrivance seem dispos'd;
No Neighbours, but a few poor simple Clowns,
Honest and true, with a well-meaning Priest.
No Fashion, &c.*

The

The Images here are so very natural, so common in Life, and the Circumstances so finely sort'd to make the Description agreeable, that we cannot help being wrapt into a secret Pleasure, and conveying our selves as it were into the midst of a Situation so entertaining. Toward the latter End of the Second Book of the *Georgicks*, *Virgil* has plac'd some Images not unlike these relating to a retir'd Country Life.

— *Secura Quies, & nescia fallere Vita,*

Spelunca, viviq; Lacus,—

— *Salvus, ac lastra ferarum,*

Et patiens operum, parvoque assueta Juventus,

Sacra Deum, sanctiq; Patres.

The Reader will perceive that I have only cull'd out such Parts as bear a Resemblance to the Tragedian's Description, *Virgil's* is general, and therefore more full and particular, the other's is a narrow confin'd View, but takes in every thing that could possibly be suppos'd in the Compass, and nothing but what is as pleasing, as natural. Description, as it is the most delightful Part of Poetry, so it is the most dangerous without a strict Guard upon the Fancy, which is apt to run Riot, and grow wanton and luxuriant upon Scenes of Pleasure, never leaving to diversify the Images, till it has spoil'd and sullied, and oppress'd the Subject. The great Delicacy is in the Choice of the Ideas, and that is what the Poet has done here with great Judgment. But to proceed, this Act is clos'd very happily with a new elegant Similitude of the *Nightingale's* Choice of her Nesting-place, which I shall not transcribe, but only observe that it looks like the Reverse of *Virgil's* *Nightingale* in the Close of the Fourth *Georgick*, which the Critics reckon one of his finest and best drawn *Similes* of that Poet. It may

may be some Pleasure to the learned Reader to compare these Passages, to which Entertainment I leave him.

I have said that the Author of this Tragedy seems to have imitated rather *Shakespear's* way of Expression, than Thinking; but this is not to be so understood, as to exclude the Imitation of his Sentiments too sometimes. For instance, in the Fourth *Act*, when the Duke of *Gloster* threatens *Jane Shore* with the severest Exercise of his Power, if she refuses to comply with his Request. The Poet there runs into a Likeness of *Shakespear's* Spirit in this Manner.

—Dost thou know

*How vile, how very a Wretch my Pow'r can make thee,
That I can let loose Fear, Distress, and Famine,
To hunt thy Heels, like Hell-hounds, through the World;*

These imaginary Persons, *Fear*, *Distress* and *Famine*, and their chasing the miserable through the World, in order to express the height of Affliction and Disgrace, is an Image exactly after the Manner of that great Poet. The Language of the sacred Writers often agrees with this way of Expression, where *Fear* is said to take hold of a Sinner, *Misery* to overtake him, and *Poverty* to come upon him like an armed Man, with many other Passages of the like Nature.

Again, The Description that *Hastings* gives in the Third *Act*, of the terrible Effects of a Civil War, is drawn with a masterly Hand; The Strokes are all just, the Circumstances affecting in the highest Degree.

*When like a Matron, butcher'd by her Sons,
And cast beside some common way a Spectacle*

Of Horror, and Affrights to Passers by,

Our groaning Country bled at every Vein.

This Picture of a divided Nation strikes strongly upon the Mind, and raises such Ideas of Horror, as if the Scene were really presented to the View in all the sad Colours that are here laid out upon it. An Enumeration of the particular Miseries follows with a feeling Representation of all the common Consequences of such a Condition. The Images, though thick and close one upon another, are not crowded, but happily diversified, and so set and ranged, as to shew at once some Part of the Confusion they describe, and yet are nicely distinguished from each other. Any one who reads the following Lines will observe this Beauty in them.

When Murders, Rapes, and Massacres prevail;

When Churches, Palaces and Cities blaz'd;

When Insolence and Barbarism triumph'd,

And swept away Distinction. Peasants trod

Upon the Necks of Nobles. Low were laid

The Reverend Crozier, and the Holy Mitre.

Here, if I may use the Metaphor, a Group of Figures, cast together in a mix'd Manner, meet the Eye first, and then some single ones, drawn out to a greater Length, and distinguished with peculiar Marks, require a closer and more attentive View. Beside, that it was very proper in *Hastings* himself being noble, to mention the Confusion of Orders and Distinctions; it is in it self a Circumstance the most unhappy of any in Times of that Nature.

Another

Another Passage that deserves our Applause is *Hastings's* reasoning about Death, a common Topick, and so much the more difficult, because every Poet of Note has something on the same Subject. Hear him.

*'Tis but to do, what, at that very Moment,
In many Nations of the peopled Earth,
A thousand and a thousand shall do with me.
'Tis but to close my Eyes, and shut out Day-light,
To view no more the wicked Ways of Men,
No longer to behold the Tyrant Gloster.*

This is not indeed pausing and doubting like *Hamlet*, or talking Philosophy with the Great *Cato*, but it is agreeable to the noble Plainness and good Sense of an *English* Nobleman, and the Conclusion bears something along with it as great, and founded on as high a Principle as any Sentiments, either of the Prince, or the Philosopher.

The first Thought of this Speech is natural and easie, and is more than once made use of by *Tully*, as a Foundation of Comfort against the Fear of Death, and I think it has received a new Beauty by passing through the Hands of this Poet. An Author is not to study a fine elaborate Speech for his dying Person, and make him talk at last what he had no Opportunities of knowing in the Course of his Life, but to adapt his Thoughts to the Character he has already formed of him, and so put such Words in his Mouth as every one shall allow equal and agreeable to the Idea they before conceived of the same Person. The Man in these Circumstances should think of those things that make the deepest Impression upon him, and if he recalls any thing into his Memory, it should be such Passages as cannot help crowding in at that sad

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Season. I am infinitely pleas'd upon this Account with *Flomer* and *Virgil*, whose dying Persons ever express themselves in this Manner; and those whom the Poet does not allow to speak, yet are said to think of some dear Relation of Life, as,

—*Dukes moriens reminiscitur Argos.*

And at other Times of the Cruelty of their Enemies; all which are Circumstances so natural, and mournfully pleasing, that they wonderful affect an intelligent Reader.

We must not omit the moving Description of *Jane Shore's* Penance, and her Demeanour under that publick Shame, which cannot help moving Compassion, the whole Scene of the Disgrace being so admirably worked up, and the incidental Passages so very much to the Advantage of the Sufferer. *Bellmour* gives the Account of it to her Husband thus:

*Before her certain Rascal Officers,
 Slaves in Authority, the Knaves of Justice,
 Proclaim'd the Tyrant Gloster's cruel Order.
 On either side her march'd an ill-look'd Priest,
 Who, with severe, with horrid bagg and Eyes,
 Did ever and anon, by turns, upbraid her,
 And thunder in her trembling Ear Damnation.
 Around her, numberless, the Rabble flow'd,
 Shouldering each other, crowding for a View,
 Gaping and Gazing, Taunting and Reviling;
 Some pitying, but those, alas! how few!
 The most, &c.*

In the *Henry the Fourth of Shakespear*, there is something that resembles this Description, where *Richard*, the deposed King, is introduced as a part of the Triumph of the Conqueror. The Looks and Usage of the Spectators, and some other Particulars of their Behaviour toward the unfortunate Prince, is not unlike this Passage, the whole of it is so moving and affecting, that *Mr. Dryden* thought it could not be read without Tears. Neither can an Audience of any Humanity hear this Part without some soft Emotions; and it is no light Reason for a more flowing Compassion that the Sufferer is of the tenderer Sex. The Disposition of the Priests on each Hand, their Curses and Threats of Damnation, is a well-devised Thought, to heighten the Misery of the Distressed; it puts me in mind (pardon the Remark) of *Virgil's* Fury that is plac'd close to the wretched Shades, and every now and then says the Poet,

Exsurgitq; facem attollens, atq; intonat ore.

*The rising Fury, now enrag'd, appears,
Aloft her waving Fiery Brand she bears,
And flashes in their Eyes, and thunders in their Ears.*

It is impossible not to take Notice of the Penitent's Deportment under this Affliction, and which is indeed no way inferior to the forgoing Part of this Description, or any other of the like Nature, that I ever met with in Poetry. *Bellmour* relates it to *Dumont* in the following manner:

*Submissive, sad, and lowly was her Look;
A burning Taper in her Hand she bore,
And on her Shoulders, carelessly confus'd,
With loose Neglect, her lovely Tresses hung;
Upon her Check a faintish Flush was spread.*

Feeble

A Review of the Tragedy

Feeble she seem'd, and sorely smit with Pain,
 While bare-foot, as she trod the flinty Pavement,
 Her Footsteps all along were mark'd with Blood,
 Not silent still she pass'd, and unrepining;
 Her streaming Eyes bent ever on the Earth,
 Except when in some bitter Pang of Sorrow,
 To Heaven she seem'd in fervent Zeal to raise,
 And begg'd that Mercy Man deny'd her here.

I have quoted this at length, tho' I think it impossible to enumerate all the Beauties that are mingled in the Description. Orway, who was a Master in the Art of Moving, and had a Key, as it were, to the Heart of his Audience, never drew a Picture of Sorrow in more strong and lively Colours; even *Belvidera* passing thro' the Crowd of *Jaffier's* Plunderers, tho' an innocent Character strikes not the Heart with a more sensible Compassion. Orway's is excellent, and so I shall transcribe it, though, in my Opinion, the *Simile* in it, tho' just, was improper at that time. It runs thus:

The beauteous *Belvidera*, like a Wretch
 That's doom'd to Banishment, came weeping forth;
 Shining thro' Tears, like April Sun in Showers,
 That labour to overcome the Cloud that loads them:
 Whilst two young Virgins, on whose Arms she lean'd,
 Kindly look'd up, and at her Grief grew sad,
 As if they catch'd the Sorrows that fell from her.

There

There are abundance of other Places in this Tragedy, which might tempt one to proceed in the examining their Excellencies, and particularly the Scene between *Jane Shore* and *Alicia*; but I studiously wave any farther Observations. What at first undertook, it is to be hop'd, is, in some measure, made good; and if these Thoughts have the good Fortune not to injure what they were intended to do some Justice to, if they shall discover any Beauties which some Readers might have missed, or be the Occasion that others shew them to a better Advantage, I then have attained my End: If not, I have at least pleas'd my self, and that is a Satisfaction no Man can deprive me of now; it is past, and defies the ill Nature of the Critick, and the Severity of the true Censurer.

F I N I S.

